

**§§ 1615.141–1615.148 [Reserved]****§ 1615.149 Program accessibility: Discrimination prohibited.**

Except as otherwise provided in § 1615.150, no qualified individual with disabilities shall, because the Commission's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by the Commission.

**§ 1615.150 Program accessibility: Existing facilities.**

(a) *General.* The Commission shall operate each program or activity so that the program or activity, when viewed in its entirety, is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. This paragraph does not—

(1) Necessarily require the Commission to make each of its existing facilities accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities;

(2) Require the Commission to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a program or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens. In those circumstances where Commission personnel believe that the proposed action would fundamentally alter the program or activity or would result in undue financial and administrative burdens, the Commission has the burden of proving that compliance with § 1615.150(a) would result in such alteration or burdens. The decision that compliance would result in such alteration or burdens must be made by the Chair of the Commission after considering all Commission resources available for use in the funding and operation of the conducted program or activity, and must be accompanied by a written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion. If an action would result in such an alteration or such burdens, the Commission shall take any other action that would not result in such an alteration or such burdens but would nevertheless ensure that individuals with disabilities receive the benefits and services of the program or activity.

(b) *Methods.* The Commission may comply with the requirements of this section through such means as redesign of equipment, reassignment of services to accessible buildings, assignment of aides to beneficiaries, home visits, delivery of services at alternate accessible sites, alteration of existing facilities and construction of new facilities, use of accessible rolling stock, or any other methods that result in making its programs or activities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. The Commission is not required to make structural changes in existing facilities where other methods are effective in achieving compliance with this section. The Commission, in making alterations to existing buildings, shall meet accessibility requirements to the extent compelled by the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4151–4157), and any regulations implementing it. In choosing among available methods for meeting the requirements of this section, the Commission shall give priority to those methods that offer programs and activities to qualified individuals with disabilities in the most integrated setting appropriate.

[54 FR 22749, May 26, 1989, as amended at 73 FR 39868, July 11, 2008]

**§ 1615.151 Program accessibility: New construction and alterations.**

Each building or part of a building that is constructed or altered by, on behalf of, or for the use of the Commission shall be designed, constructed, or altered so as to be readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. The definitions, requirements, and standards of the Architectural Barriers Act (42 U.S.C. 4151–4157), as established in 41 CFR subpart 101–19.6, apply to buildings covered by this section.

**§§ 1615.152–1615.159 [Reserved]****§ 1615.160 Communications.**

(a) The Commission shall take appropriate steps to ensure effective communication with applicants, participants, personnel of other Federal entities, and members of the public.

(1) The Commission shall furnish appropriate auxiliary aids where necessary to afford an individual with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, a program or activity conducted by the Commission.

(i) In determining what type of auxiliary aid is necessary, the Commission shall give primary consideration to the requests of the individual with disabilities.

(ii) The Commission need not provide individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices of a personal nature.

(2) Where the Commission communicates with applicants and beneficiaries by telephone, telecommunication devices for deaf persons (TDD's) or equally effective telecommunication systems shall be used.

(b) The Commission shall ensure that interested persons, including persons with impaired vision or hearing, can obtain information as to the existence and location of accessible services, activities, and facilities.

(c) The Commission shall provide signs at a primary entrance to each of its inaccessible facilities, directing users to a location at which they can obtain information about accessible facilities. The international symbol for accessibility shall be used at each primary entrance of an accessible facility.

(d) This section does not require the Commission to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a program or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens. In those circumstances where Commission personnel believe that the proposed action would fundamentally alter the program or activity or would result in undue financial and administrative burdens, the Commission has the burden of proving that compliance with §1615.160 would result in such alteration or burdens. The decision that compliance would result in such alteration or burdens must be made by the Chair of the Commission after considering all Commission resources available for use in the funding and operation of the conducted program or activity, and must be accompanied by a written statement of the reasons for

reaching that conclusion. If an action required to comply with this section would result in such an alteration or such burdens, the Commission shall take any other action that would not result in such an alteration or such burdens but would nevertheless ensure that, to the maximum extent possible, individuals with disabilities receive the benefits and services of the program or activity.

[54 FR 22749, May 26, 1989, as amended at 73 FR 39866, July 11, 2008]

§§ 1615.161–1615.169 [Reserved]

§ 1615.170 Compliance procedures.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, this section applies to all allegations of discrimination on the basis of disability in programs or activities conducted by the Commission in violation of section 504. This section also applies to all complaints alleging a violation of the agency's responsibility to procure electronic and information technology under section 508 whether filed by members of the public or EEOC employees or applicants.

(b) The Commission shall process complaints alleging violations of section 504 with respect to employment according to the procedures established by EEOC in 29 CFR part 1614 pursuant to section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 791). With regard to employee claims concerning agency procurements made in violation of section 508, the procedures set out in paragraphs (d) through (m) of this section shall be used.

(c) Responsibility for implementation and operation of this section shall be vested in the Director, Office of Equal Opportunity (Director of OEO).

(d) *Filing a complaint.* (1) Any person who believes that he or she has been subjected to discrimination prohibited by this part or that the agency's procurement of electronic and information technology has violated section 508, or authorized representative of such person, may file a complaint with the Director of OEO. Any person who believes that any specific class of persons has